THE TIMES.

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Marrying in France.

That young girls and young men in France are sedulously kept apart, that wooing and winning are unnecessary preliminaries to a French marriage, are facts that have been much commented upon; but how they marry in France and the etiquette of that very formal and business-like ceremonial, and the preliminaries considered necessary thereto, are, we believe, but little understood on our side of the water.

The first thing to be done is to go through that time-honored formality called popping the question. But a French aspirant for matrimonial honors is not allowed to make his proposals in person to the young lady. That would be a sad breach of *ies convenances* and would probably horrify the *jeune personne* out of her seven senses. A friend is charged with the delicate office of asking her parents, not if they will accept M. So-and-so for a son-in-law, but if it would be agreeable to them to consider him in that possible light. Should the answer prove favorable, the gentleman may desire an interview with the lady's parents or guardians, at which interview the young lady must not be present. In this first interview all business questions, including the important one of the dowry, and the almost equally important one of the young man's fortune, expectations, etc., are settled. Should all these preliminaries be favorably arranged, a second interview is decided upon, and the day and hour rigorously settled beforehand. Exactly at the specified time the future bridegroom must present himself, carefully but not too carefully dressed—that point is essential. His betrothed, in elegant but simple attire, awaits his coming, surrounded by her parents and relatives. After this first visit he is entitled to be received as a *pretendu*, but must request admission to this privilege either by writing or through one of his near relatives. Permission once accorded, he is then for the first time presented to his lady love as her future husband, and may afterward visit the house on an intimate but not a familiar footing. He must always come in full dress, nor can his *fiancee* receive him in other than a very careful toilet. A morning-dress, no matter how fresh or tasteful, is completely inadmissible. The gentleman must invariably send his *fiancee* a bouquet on the days that he intends to call. The engaged pair must never be permitted to indulge in a *tete-a-tete*, nor can they call each other by their first names without using the prefixes of Monsieur and Mademoiselle. An engagement ought to be kept secret, and should be officially announced only a few days before the signing of the contract. Of course, French engagements are usually very brief, such a life of constraint and formality being agreeable to neither party.

These preliminary formalities having been scrupulously gone through with, next comes the question of the wedding, or rather weddings, for our French couple must be married twice over,once at the mayoralty, in accordance with the law, and once at church, to satisfy religious scruples. This latter ceremony is by no means essential to the legality of the marriage; but not to be married in church is considered a proof of irreligion and republicanism of the most ultra type. Now comes an amount of bother which, to our extremely simple ideas as regards marriage, appears to be at once stupid and unnecessary. As a necessary preliminary to the civil marriage, the bride and groom must arm themselves with half a dozen documents each. First comes the *acte de naissance*, or birth-certificate; then the consent in writing of both parents, or, if either or both of them be dead, the proofs of their decease, and the consent of grandparents or guardians in their stead. If you are 60 years of age, and have parents still living, this written consent is still indispensable, unless, indeed, you go through the formality of the *trois sommations respectueuses*, which consists in "respectfully summoning" your recalcitrant parents three times to show cause why you should not espouse the beloved of your heart, after which you can do as you please. But such a proceeding is looked upon with so much disfavor by French society that it is only resorted to in very extreme cases. If you are an officer in the army, you must get the permission of the Minister of War to your nuptials, and he will not grant it unless the bride possesses either a dowry of 30,000 francs, or a settled income of 1,200 francs a year. All these consents obtained, next comes the publication of the bans, which takes place not only in the church, but also at the mayoralty. The signing of the contract is the next formality to be fulfilled Usually, in Paris, this ceremonial is made the occasion of a family festival, and a special dress is prepared for the bride, very often a fac-simile of the wedding dress, only in some delicate evening dress tint instead of white. The notary reads aloud the contract, after which the bridegroom rises, bows to the bride,and signs his name, afterward passing the pen to her. She signs in her turn, and must then hand the pen to the mother of the groom, who must give it in turn to the mother of the bride. These little points of etiquette are strictly observed. All the other relations then sign in turn, according to age or station. It is considered a great honor to obtain some high personage as a witness to the contract. If there is a *fete* given on the occasion, the *corbeille* or wedding presents of the bridegroom, and the *trousseau* as well, are exhibited to the guests. The *corbeille* comprises shawls, jewels, gloves, laces, furs, etc., together with a purse containing a sum of money in gold, the whole inclosed in a large and elegant box, or in a handsome work-table. The value of this present is usually supposed to represent 1 per cent of the young lady's dowry.—*Appleton's Journal*.

A Country School.

When I was a little girl, I went to a little school, which was kept by a very little lady, in a very little house. The little lady herself lived in another little house, which was divided from the little school-house only by a little garden. I did not know then how little the houses, and the garden, and my school-teacher were. Miss Caroline seemed large and powerful to me; and as for her ferule, it looked bigger to me than the big trees of California looked when I saw them a few years ago. But when I went back, a grown woman, to my old home, and walked past Miss Caroline's cottage and the little old school-house, I hardly could believe my eyes, every thing was so tiny; and I could have picked Miss Caroline up under my arm.

The school-house had been a shoe-maker's shop once, and some of the shoe-maker's furniture had been left in it. There was the bench on which he used to sit and work; this had a little open box at one end, where he used to keep his tools; this bench stood in the middle of the room, in front of Miss Caroline's desk, and all the classes sat on it to recite their lessons. The end which had the open box on it was called the "head" of the class. Once I kept up "at the head," in spelling, a whole week, and I grew so used to having hold of the edge of the box, and slipping my fingers back and forth on it, that when I lost my place, and had a boy or a girl on my left side, I had hard work not to keep all the time taking hold of their arms, instead of the box. There used to be also a little drawer under the bench, at this end; but Miss Caroline had that taken off, after she found out that it was there Ned Spofford hid the "spit-balls" he used to fire up and down all the classes he recited in. Oh, what a bad boy Ned Spofford was! But how we did all like him! Even Miss Caroline herself, I think, liked him better than any other scholar in all the school; and yet he gave her twice as much trouble as all the other scholars put together. But he was so good-natured and affectionate that nobody could help loving him, in spite of his mischief. He never resisted nor struggled when she had to punish him. I really think he got feruled as often as once a week; but he used to hold out his hand the minute she told him to, and look straight into her eyes while she struck him. Sometimes he would bite his lips, and the tears would come into his eyes, but he never cried, nor begged off, as the rest of us did. He was as brave as he was mischievous. Even when he had to sit on the dunce-stool for twenty minutes with his mouth wide open and a piece of corn-cob set firmly between his teeth, he never cried. This was Miss Caroline's worst punishment. I think if she herself had tried it once, to see how much it hurt, she never would have had the heart to inflict it on us. At first, when she wedged in the piece of cob, you felt like laughing that any body should think such a thing as that could be much of a punishment; but pretty soon your jaws began to ache, and then the back of your neck ached, and then the pain reached up into the back of your head, and into your ears, and it became real torture; there was not a single boy in school that could bear it without the tears streaming down his cheeks, except Ned Spofford. Miss Caroline very rarely did it to girls; i think no one but Sarah Kellogg and I ever had it. We were the worst girls in school; we two and Ned Spofford were the three black sheep in Miss Caroline's little flock.—*Saxe Holm, in St. Nicholas for May*.

Reminiscences of a Famous Woman.

Society here is in mourning for Mme. Octavia Walton Le Vert, who died on the 13th inst., at the house of a relative near Augusta, Ga. She was the daughter of Col. George Walton of Prince Edward's County, Virginia, and granddaughter of George Walton, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Her father was the second Governor of Florida, and it was at Pensacola that she began her career as a belle,a career that closed only with her death, for although the charms of face and figure were buried in that stoutness with which age is apt to afflict its victims, the better, finer charm of mind and manner remained. She spoke every modern language, was an incorrigable flirt in her youth, and counted her offers by hundreds. Spaniards, Italians, Frenchmen, Germans, Englishmen, Brazilians and—worst of all—Americans by the score sighed in vain at her shrine. She would tell them in the harsh or musical accent of their individual countries that she loved them, but not with a love like theirs, and this so prettily that they would leave her presence declaring it better to be refused by her than accepted by another. Her foot was one of the greatest attractions; it was so tiny, so delicate, that her little straw slippers were eagerly sought for, and happy he who could obtain one as a *gage d'amitie* from pretty Octavia. On one occasion a sloop-of-war was to sail from Pensacola homeward bound. Every single officer from Captain to Middie had laid his heart before her, and every one had been obliged to take back his proffered gift, so as a balm to hurt affection they gave her the most superb ball they could devise. Of course she danced from 10 till 4, and then, as they were to sail at daybreak, her health was proposed as a last compliment. The Captain was talking eagerly to her when his juniors came to propose the toast, and as they reached him he thrust a tiny satin slipper into his breast, which she had just drawn from her pocket (belles then always carried an extra pair) and given him, and it was from this bit of a shoe that he drank the toast, "The prettiest, wittiest, sweetest and dearest girl in America." She married, in 1836, Dr. Henri Le Vert, a gifted physician of Mobile, and a son of Rochambeau's fleet surgeon, spent her winters here during Jackson's administration, and went to England in 1853 to visit the Duke of Rutland. Thence she traveled through Europe and the Holy Land—a much more difficult trip then than now—returning to her native country after three years' absence, only to pick up her scepter where she had laid it down. Among her friends she counted such men as Washington Irving and Lamartine, and it was at the urgent entreaty of the latter she published her "Souvenirs of Travel." At the close of the war—which she bitterly deplored, and did all that a woman could do to avert—she found herself reduced from affluence to poverty, and it was then she began the readings that have supported her and educated her younger children up to the present time. She was 68 years old when she died, but retained to the very last the manner that made the name of Octavia Le Vert known and admired from Maine to Mexico.—*Washington Letter to Cincinnati Commercial*.

THE various German potentates recently united to present a joint souvenir to the Emperor William upon his eightieth birthday. The eccentric King of Bavaria refused at first to participate, and was induced to do so only by the urgent remonstrances of his friend the Grand Duke of Baden.

An Amateur Novelist's First Attempt at a Thrilling Story.

The following appears in the *National Republican*, of Washington, and is represented to have been written by the office boy, aged 14 years. The title is

ALL FOR HER.

'twas a sultry day in the month of the roses (our story opens in one of the western states) as a young lady was sitting on a fallen tree, sketching the Landskape before her. this young lady's name was lillie thornton. she had large blue eyes and large masses of golden hair. "I wonder why Harry Mills cares so much for me. he really does not love me," she mused. "Ah! yes I do, lillie; you are the only woman I will ever care for." the speaker was a young man, apparently 23 years of age. he had large hazel eyes and curly chestnut hair, & his features were regular. "do you really care for me, harry," asked lillie, in a suppressed tone. "why, of course i do, lillie; you know i do," replied harry. "then why don't you make a preposel to me," laughed lillie. "because you would not except it." "how do you know i would not?" replied lillie, laughing loudly again. "then, will you be my wife?" asked harry, laughing in his turn. "why, Harry Thornton, don't you know that papa would not agree to it, for i thought you was going to live a bachelor all your life," replied lillie, in a sober tone. "that was only fun," replied harry. "Well, harry, you know that i am engaged to my cousin, James Thornton." "No, i did not know it, and i ask you once more to be my wife," replied Harry, in a cold tone. "i really can not, harry," replied lillie, also in a cold tone. "then we part in anger; my curses are upon your cousin," said he, angrily; so he went away, and lillie never saw him any more that month.

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.5 years had passed, and sitting in her drawing-room was lillie thornton. she was not married, because her cousin died of heart disease. As she sat she murmured Bitterly. "Oh, harry, how sorry i am; i drove you away; oh, come back to me; i am dying," she cried, throwing herself down on a sofa near by, and, swooning away, the servants all ran to her assistance. We must now return to harry, as he turned away in anger and wended his way toward his hotel, where he was Boarding. He murmured as he went, "I will quit this place imeditially, and go to the continent;" so he went in and packed up his things and crossed the ocean. "I must try to forget her," he mused, bitterly. he went to rhone and established himself as a artist. 5 years passed, and he resolved to visit his country again; so he crossed the ocean again and went to his birth-place. as he rhode past the manor in which lillie lived he noticed signs of disturbance. he asked the old gate-keeper what was the matter. the old man shook his head and said. "oh, marse harry, Miss lillie am going on about you awful." "is not miss lillie married?" asked harry in a warm tone. "why, laws, no; didint you know that her cousin died?" "can I see her?" asked Harry again, in another warm tone. "why, yes, indeed," replied the old man; "walk right in the dining-room." harry went in and saw lilly reclining on a sofa. "oh, harry," she cried. "this will kill me," she sobbed. "have not you forgotten me?" asked harry, coldly. "do not talk that way," pleaded lillie, in a soberly tone. "I have come to ask you to be my wife," again replied harry. "Yes, Harry, I will," cried lillie. "come to my arms, my darling," cried Harry, joyfully.

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There was a quiet wedding in the manor after 2 month, and Harry and lillie are happy after all that past.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL tells a good story about his butcher. One morning the man expiated upon the loveliness of the moonlight of the night before, and, just as the poet was thinking that he had done him an injustice in never having given him credit for refinement of soul, the butcher added: "The night was so fine I jest couldn't sleep, and had to get up and go to killin'."

—At Berne, Switzerland, there was a row on the recent anniversary of the outbreak of the Commune in France. The police interfered, and took away the red flag which had been hoisted. The crowd resisted, and wounds were inflicted in the struggle.